

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Favorable reconsideration of this Application as presently amended and in light of the following discussion is respectfully requested.

After entry of the foregoing Amendment, Claims 1, 3-9, 11-17 and 20-21, are currently pending in the present Application. Claims 2, 10, and 18-19 are cancelled. Claims 1, 3, 4, 7, 9, 11, 12, 15, 17 and 20 have been amended herewith. No new matter is added.

By way of summary, the title is objected to; the specification is objected to; Claims 7-8, 12, 15-16, and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph; Claims 1, 5-6, 9, 12-14, and 17-18 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102 (b) as being anticipated by Koike (U.S. Pat. No. 5,940,315 hereafter Koike).

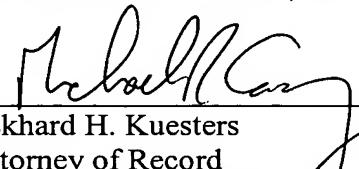
In response to the rejection of Claims 7-8, 12, 15-16, and 20-21 under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, Claims 7, 12, 15, and 20 have been amended for purposes of clarification only. Furthermore, Claims 3, 4, 7, 11, and 15 have been amended to change their dependencies based on the cancellation of claims 2 and 10.

Applicant acknowledges with appreciation the indication of allowable subject matter, but respectfully traverses the rejection of Claims 1 and 9 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Koike. To facilitate prosecution, however, Claims 1, 9, and 17 are amended to incorporate the limitations of the respectively indicated dependent claims 2, 10, 18 and 19.

Consequently, in view of the above discussion, it is respectfully submitted that the present application is in condition for formal allowance. An early and favorable action is therefore respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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